Office des personnes handicapées du Québec
Direction communications et documentation

Thesaurus: handicapped person

English presentation

by

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À part-x-égale!

INTRODUCTION

Thésaurus: Personne Handicapée[1] (handicapped person) has been prepared as part of the principal function of the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, namely coordination of all services provided to handicapped persons. In this case, more specifically, what is involved is the organization of information regarding the handicapped persons.[2]

It was for this purpose that the Centre de documentation at the OPHQ was created. From the very outset, that Centre adopted a method for organizing information which was founded on techniques used to enter bibliographic data on a computer, particularly indexing by descriptor.

THE THESAURUS: ITS ROLE

Processing of any document, which is done before the document is stored with a view to future retrieval, involves on the one hand a bibliographic description of the document (cataloguing) and, on the other hand, a description of its content, which can be in the form of indexing. In our context, "indexing" means describing the content of documents by assigning them descriptors, or key words. The thesaurus must not be used for the first operation but only for the second (indexing.)

What is a thesaurus? It is reference work, basic in documentation, which contains an organized, standardized list of descriptors. It is used to analyse documents and to retrieve them from a mass of documents. A thesaurus is also a terminological work which contains the specialized language related to a specific field of activity, but it does not provide definitions of the terms it contains.

BACKGROUND AND METHOD

Five years ago, the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec decided to prepare a thesaurus on handicapped persons. Immediately the question was asked: given the existence of a thesaurus on exceptional child (Thesaurus: exceptional child)[3], would this proposed new thesaurus in fact be something redundant? The thesaurus on exceptional child had been published in Québec by the Editeur officiel, and its subject was related to the problems of the handicapped persons.

A preliminary study showed that the proposed work would have embodied more than half the concepts in Thesaurus: exceptional child, so the Office decided to prepare an expanded, improved version of that same thesaurus.

We collected a great many terms from various documentary and institutional sources.

To the terms thus compiled were added a wealth of potential new descriptors taken mainly from three sources:

(1) an update of the descriptors of Ste Justine's Hospital's Centre d'information sur la santé de l'enfant, which is where Thesaurus: exceptional child was written:
(2) the list of descriptors experimented with at the Office's Centre de documentation over four years: and especially
(3) the indexing of the overall policy."On Equal Terms".[4]

The OPHQ also decided to incorporate in the thesaurus the terms in the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps,published by the World Health Organization.[5]

This decision was a highly important one, since it considerably altered the project under way. Until then, we had been working with the idea of an a posteriori thesaurus: one primarily including terms which had already been used during the indexing. On the basis of the World Health Organization, the thesaurus was now built up more along the lines of a priori thesaurus, and henceforth assumed a normative value. This thesaurus, in fact, contains terminology which complies with a new concept of the situation of the handicapped persons, which in turn is the result of reflection broadly updated by the OPHQ in recent years. It follows, then, that this thesaurus has as its source an increasing number of writings oriented toward philosophy, expression of the needs of environment, and political literature on the social integration of the handicapped persons. It reflects a major change in ways of thinking which has begun both at the national and at the international level, and attempts to support this change. Another aspect of the thesaurus which is worth mentioning is its social, and non-medical, nature.

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

Our thesaurus contains 3 650 descriptors and 2 000 non-descriptors (synonyms or terms rejected). These 3 650 descriptors have been divided into 95 semantic fields.

Figure 1 shows the list of the 95 schema titles and the grouping of fields.

The schemas are divided into 7 blocks.
We begin with the problems involved in the first block development of the person , and proceed with those involved with health the second block. Here are found, among others, terms related to causes or conditions for the appearances of impairments: illnesses and trauma, accidents, and the schema on prevention.

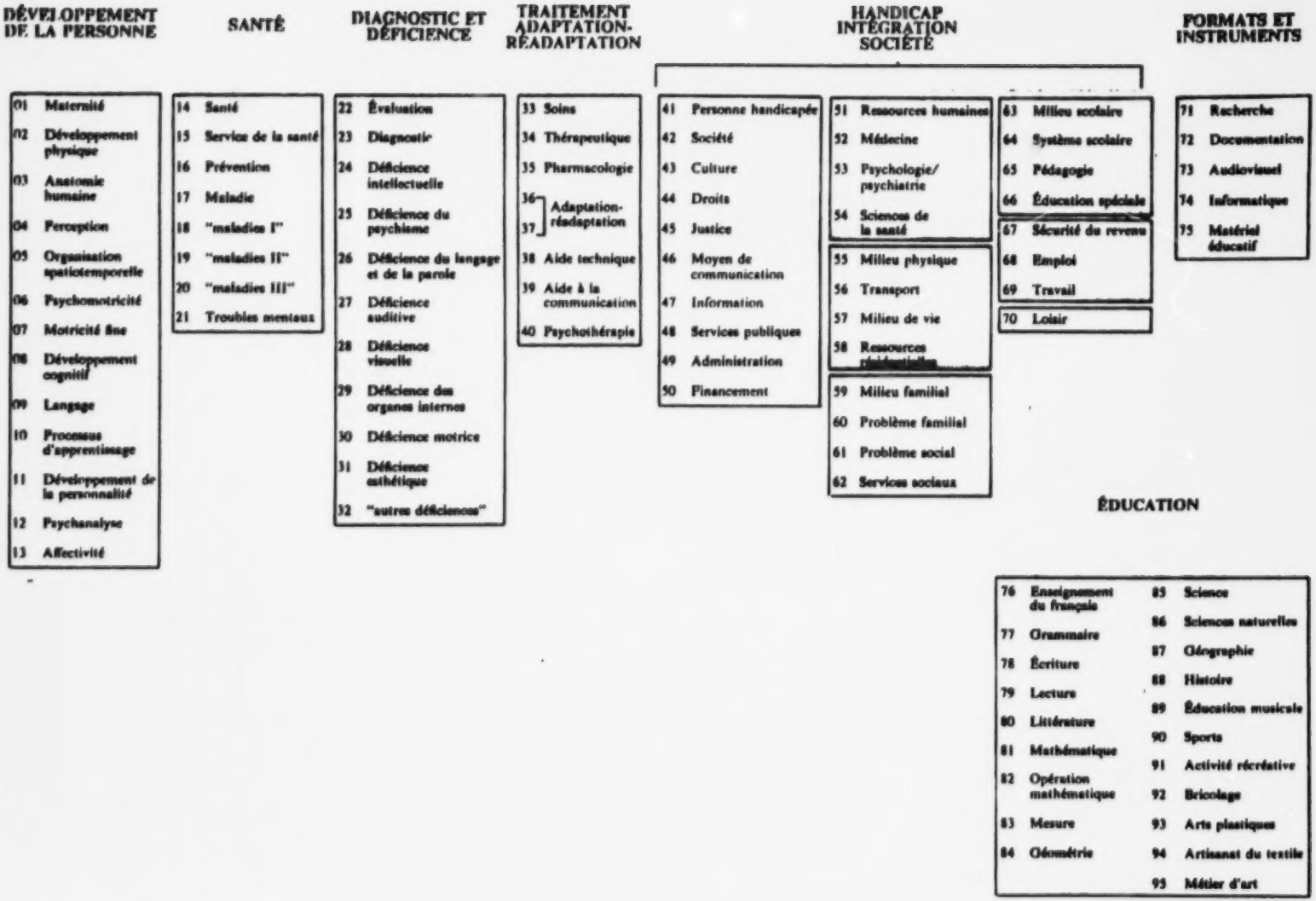


Figure 1 - Liste des 95 titres de schémas et regroupement des champs

The next block deals with diagnosis and impairment, it deals with the detecting of an impairment and proposes a classification f impairments based on the World Health Organization international classification. Once the impairment has been diagnosed, it must, where at all possible, be eliminated, or at the very least its seriousness must be reduced. For this reason, the fourth block deals with treatment and methods of adaptation or rehabilitation.

The fifth block generally deals with social integration of the handicapped persons and indicates what suitable, adapted resources are available in the various areas where any citizen is entitled to be able to take part. Here there are a number of group of fields: some fields represent general social framework, followed by human resources, autonomy of handicapped persons in respect to their living conditions, others are concerned with family and social problems, integration at school and at work. Finally, a schema on recreation and that rounds out this part of the thesaurus.

The last two blocks deal with formats, instruments and education.

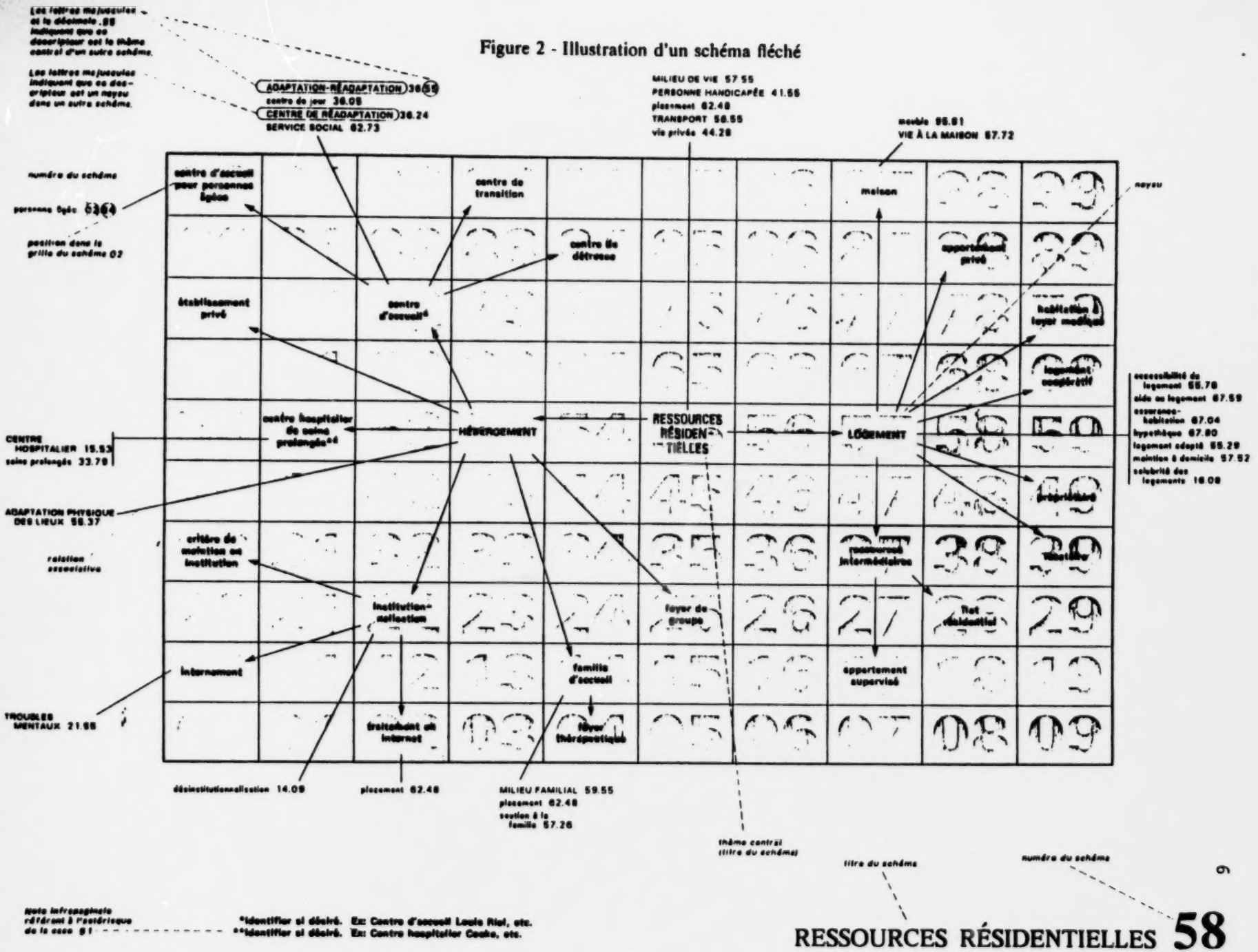
GRAPHIC PRESENTATION

The vocabulary which forms part of a thesaurus can be presented in any number of ways. In our case, we opted for arrowed schemas which had also been used in the thesaurus on exceptional child

A grid was used, containing 100 boxes read from left to right and bearing the numbers 00 to 99. (figure 2)

The central theme, which corresponds to the title of the schema is written in capital letters in box 55. The schema title, then, is a descriptor, as is each descriptor entered in a box in the grid.

Figure 2 - Illustration d'un schéma fléché



Around the central theme of each schema are cores in capital letters, though these capitals will be smaller than those in the title. Around these cores, are the other descriptors, given in small letters. The typographer's function is to make the schema easier to use by pointing out a logical sequence, rather than any order of importance. Descriptors in capital letters are terms more generally used than those written in small letters. The size of the print, however, is not indicative of any restriction in the use of the terms.

HIERARCHICAL AND ASSOCIATIVE RELATIONS

Semantic relations are establised between the various descriptors inside a grid. Each link is represented by an arrow generally pointing from the central theme to the core and from the core to the other descriptors. This arrow symbolizes a hierarchical relation or a relationship of inclusion and runs from the most generic to the most specific. Terms are placed thus in an effort to clarify their meaning in order that they be well used: the indexer is given complete freedom as to the choice of descriptors. Descriptors within one schema can also be related to other descriptors entered outside the grid. These descriptors belong to other schemas, and are accompanied by a number which indicates the position of each in its own schema. In this case the link is represented by a line rather than an arrow: the relationship is associative. Three thousand of these have been established among the various descriptors of the thesaurus.

LIST OF TERMS IN THE SCHEMA

The thesaurus is printed across the pages width-wise, and is read continously, top-to-bottom, on the two pages. With each schema comes a list of the terms in it; the list is placed above the schema.

This is an alphabetical list, of all the descriptors appearing in the schema. Each French expression is followed by its English equivalent. Some descriptors are also followed by one or more non-descriptors. Each non-descriptor is preceded by the abbreviation UF : (for: used for.)

Example: Handicapped person UF invalid
handicapped
crippled

This means that the expression "handicapped persons" is to be used instead of each of the other terms. The presence of 2 000 non-descriptors in this thesaurus is testimony to the fact that there are still a number of pejorative and inadequate words dealing with handicapped persons.

Thus we have made an attempt to control vocabulary and suggest new terminology which will correspond to a new vision of the problems surrounding the handicapped persons.

A VARIABLE INDEX

A vital part of the thesaurus is the variable or rotary index. Indeed, this constitutes the first gateway to the schema. In this index are all the terms recorded in the thesaurus (descriptors and non-descriptors alike), arranged in alphabetical order once for every semantic element they contain. The descriptor social integration , for instance, appears twice in the variable index: once within the alphabetical grouping of words beginning with "s" and the second time within the alphabetical grouping of words beginn g with "i".

ENGLISH-FRENCH INDEX

This index makes up the last part of the thesaurus. It is a list of all the descriptors, translated into English. Each English word is followed by the corresponding French descriptor. Since only the descriptors have been translated into English,

41.77 **DISABILITY**
INCAPACITE

67.79 **DISABILITY ALLOWANCE**
RENTE D'INVALIDITE

67.40 **DISABILITY DEDUCTION**
DEDUCTION POUR INVALIDITE

61.73 **DISADVANTAGED ENVIRONMENT**
MILIEU DEFAVORISE

30.29 **DISARTICULATION**
DESARTICULATION

17.20 **DISASTER**
CATASTROPHE

89.97 **DISCIPLINE**
DISCIPLINE

73.10 **DISCOGRAPHY**
DISCOGRAPHIE

34.86 **DISCONTINUANCE OF TREATMENT**
ABANDON DU TRAITEMENT

20.89 **DISCOPATHY**
DISCOPATHIE

04.43 **DISCRIMINATION(PERCEPTION)**
DISCRIMINATION(PERCEPTION)

43.18 **DISCRIMINATION**
DISCRIMINATION

10.79 **DISCRIMINATION LEARNING**
APPRENTISSAGE PAR DISCRIMINATION

17.58 **DISEASE**
MALADIE

17.74 **DISEASE CLASSIFICATION**
NOSOGRAPHIE

17.25 **DISEASE ONSET**
APPARITION DE LA MALADIE

31.33 **DISFIGUREMENT OF HEAD REGION**
DEFICIENCE ESTHETIQUE DE LA TETE

31.61 **DISFIGUREMENT OF LIMBS**
DEFICIENCE ESTHETIQUE DES MEMBRES

31.41 **DISFIGUREMENT OF TRUNK REGION**
DEFICIENCE ESTHETIQUE DU TRONC

31.55 **DISFIGURING IMPAIRMENT**
DEFICIENCE ESTHETIQUE

93.18 **DISGUISE**
DEGUISEMENT

34.08 **DISINTOXICATION**
CURE DE DESINTOXICATION

74.38 **DISK DRIVE**
UNITE DE DISQUE

17.40 **DISLOCATION**
LUXATION

12.40 **DISPLACEMENT(PSYCHOANALYSIS)**
DEPLACEMENT(PSYCHANALYSE)

35.25 **DISRUPTIVE DRUG**
PSYCHODYSLEPTIQUE

65.20 **DISSERTATION**
THESE

08.77 **DISSOCIATION**
DISSOCIATION

87.89 **DISTANCE ON SCALE**
DISTANCE A L'ECHELLE

05.93 **DISTANCE PERCEPTION**
PERCEPTION DE LA DISTANCE

85.94 **DISTILLING**
DISTILLATION

58.84 **DISTRESS CENTER**
CENTRE DE DETRESSE

82.08 **DISTRIBUTIVITY**
DISTRIBUTIVITE

25.77 **DISTURBANCE OF BODY AWARENESS**
TROUBLES DE LA CONSCIENCE DU CORPS

29.21 **DISTURBANCE OF CARDIAC RHYTHM**
TROUBLES DU RYTHME CARDIAQUE

29.60 **DISTURBANCE OF MENSTRUAL FUNCTION**
TROUBLES MENSTRUELS

25.68 **DISTURBANCE OF TIME-SPACE PERCEPTION**
TROUBLES DE LA PERCEPTION TEMPS-ESPACE

82.10 **DIVISION**
DIVISION

60.21 **DIVORCE**
DIVORCE

27.09 **DIZZINESS**
ETOURDISSEMENT

47.09 **DOCUMENT REPRODUCTION**
REPRODUCTION DE DOCUMENT

47.14 **DOCUMENT RETRIEVAL**
RECHERCHE DOCUMENTAIRE

72.58 **DOCUMENTATION**
DOCUMENTATION

75.91 **DOLL**
POUPEE

78.90 **DOLL'S HOUSE**
MAISON DE POUPEE

86.95 **DOMESTIC ANIMAL**
ANIMAL DOMESTIQUE

57.81 **DOMESTIC CHORE**
TACHE DOMESTIQUE

57.61 **DOMESTIC HELP**
AIDE DOMESTIQUE

57.70 **DOMESTIC MAINTENANCE**
ENTRETIEN DU DOMICILE

75.07 **DOMINO**
DOMINO

79.11 **DOUBLE CONSONANT**
CONSONNE REDOUBLEE

Figure 3 - English-French index

this cannot be called a bilingual thesaurus, but rather a thesaurus with English equivalents. (figure 3)

CONCLUSION

To conclude, a brief rundown of the various use and functions of a thesaurus.

THE THESAURUS: HANDICAPPED PERSON

(1) it facilitates the organization of many specialized documentation centres;

(2) it makes possible the establishment of data banks;

(3) it coordinates the terminology used;

(4) it coordinates the efforts made by various parties involved;

(5) finally it facilitates the exchange of information at the national and international levels, and also may be used for other purposes: drafting of texts, preparation of classroom material and lectures, translation, etc.

It is our hope that the reform of this vocabulary will contribute in its way to bringing about a change in attitudes toward the handicapped persons, and to enable them more quickly to take their rightful place in our society.

1. Sophie Janik, Lise Brunet, Louis-Luc Lecompte. Thésaurus: Personne handicapée. Québec: Ministère des Communications, 1986, 429 p.

2. An Act to secure the handicapped in the exercise of their rights. R.S.Q., Chapter E-20.1, updated to 1 September 1984, Division II, 1,25.

3. Pierrette Dubuc, Lise Thibodeau-Brunet et Louis-Luc Lecompte. Thésaurus: Enfance inadaptée. Québec, Editeur officiel, 1979, 340 p.

4. Québec (Prov.) Office des personnes handicapées. On Equal terms. The social integration of the handicapped persons. A challenge for every one. Québec: Ministère des Communications, 1984, 350 p.

5. World Health Organisation. International classification of impairments, disabilities, and handicaps. A manual of classification relating to the consequences of disease. Geneva, WHO, 1980, 207 p.